

Thursday, April 14, 1966

DUXBURY CLIPPER

## H.E. MERRY CELEBRATES 90TH

H.E. Merry, who was Chief Engineer of the Duxbury Fire Department for 30 years, and who so well remembers the handtub, horse-drawn engine era, was 90 years old on Sunday, April 10.

Still active, Mr. Merry, who lives with his wife, Laura, on Merry Ave., delivers eggs to favorite customers in a car he drives, and is still an alert and interested citizen who told a CBS television audience two years ago of the changes he has witnessed in a long and

eventful life during which he saw service during the Spanish-American War, worked as a farmer and sold meat from house to house in Duxbury from his delivery truck.

### A REAL NATIVE

Coming to Duxbury in 1899, he built one house on Washington St. and later bought 50 acres of uncultivated land once known as Sprague Pastures. He cleared the land and built a barn and a ten-room house.

He wound up with 150 acres, now well known as the North Hill Country Club and operated by John, one of his nine children. He had 59 grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

He remembers growing corn as high as a tall elephant's eye. Fourteen feet high, he recalls, and potatoes so big only 30 would fit into an honest bushel. "Feed your land and it will feed you," he used to say. He still says it.

His former meat market from which he delivered choice cuts in his horse-drawn wagon, is now a home on Stetson Ave.

A fire captain for nine years before he became chief, he launched what may be the first forest fire department in the U.S. to cooperate with neighboring towns.

"In the old days," he recalls, "it was the practice to fight fires to the town limits, then let the next town take over."

### ANOTHER PROJECT

H. E., who was the political boss in days of old (and a benevolent despot was Mr. Merry), organized the Duxbury junior fire department which drilled high school boys.

"Every week we had something educational at the station. We had no juvenile delinquency; the trouble with children today is that they are idle," he adds with a characteristic twinkle in his steady blue eyes.

In addition to John, the golf impresario, his children include a minister, two teachers, two nurses, a contractor, a draftsman and a businesswoman.

Born in Nova Scotia, he left school at the age of 13, came to the U.S. when he was 16, and served for a while as a trolley conductor in Brockton before settling in Duxbury.

Duxbury is proud of H.E. Merry, who has over the years served the town so well.